From: Adrian Rossi
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 10:18pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Madam,

As an IT professional, and having for many years worked in this field, I am sincerely concerned about Microsoft's monopoly position. It should be obvious at the outset that I have no doubt whatsoever that by the definition of a monopoly Microsoft is indeed an very ruthless and insidious one. My concerns are many but focus mainly on what will happen to the field of IT as a whole if MS is allowed to continue to squash
competitors and enter (like a cancer) more an more software markets, in which it offers little innovation.

My first objection is an everyday one; why is it that if I buy a PC it comes installed with MS operating systems
even if I do not wish it ? The fact is that a part of the purchase price goes to MS and I have had absolutely no
choice inthe matter. You could argue I could buy a PC without the OS separately; but the price of such a PC is
guaranteed to be much higher. It is more affordable (by a few hundred dollars at least) to purchase a PC with MS OS
pre-installed and then to wipe the drive and re-install another non-MS OS (e.g. Linux). I believe that if I as a consumer
am required to buy a product which I do not want and give money to a company I do not want to then that company is
a monopoly, as only a monopoly has such an ability to coerce hardware vendors into such an arrangement.

Secondly, I see an ever-increasing and very sinister, replacing of other vendors' software applications with Microsoft
equivalents (case in point Real Player with Windows Media Player). This bias is bad enough but I believe it is more sinister than this-
I have repeatedly and on many occasions had problems running non-MS software on MS operating systems. Performance
is compromised or it simply crashes. But I never experience this with MS apps on MS systems. There could be many
reasons for this of course, but the fact remains that *any* vendor should be able to write software which works as well on
MS OSes as Microsofts does. This is the essence of the solution to this dispute; force MS to open its OS not for copying of course
becuase it is their intellectual property, but so that other software vendors can write reliable software on top of it, and hence
compete with MS on their own operating systems. This is a step in the right direction, but only the first step.

I have heard countless stories from colleagues and company executives about the hand-cuffs put on them by MS. They know
that they must go with the standard, and the standard OS is Windows. But then they find that they must

also use MS software--why!?--
in order to ensure that it works well on Windows. This is wrong! There should be no link between the software and the OS it
executes on. But there is and this is the way MS is able to sell software which is clearly of inferior quality, or lacking in innovation,
and the way that vendors with better products are shut-out of the market by this monopoly. Once again if software manufacturers
could produce MS-like software which can run well on MS OSes then this might give others a chance. Of course it doesnt stop
MS from 'upgrading' the OS from under them, and these companies are then forced to play catch up and support this new system (e.g.
Windows XP). A company I know of could not afford to support XP, as it involves a considerable amount of effort and testing,
especially after they have supported Win9x, NT and 2000. So this tactic effectively pulls the rug out fromunder software vendors
and there is nothing they can do about it. This is another monopolistic tool at the disposal of MS.

Finally, I have seen many times the case where MS decides unilaterally to raise license fees on their OS or products. And the fact
is that comapnies MUST pay up. There is no choice because they can not do without MW Word or MS Powerpoint or any of the other
standard applications used through out the world. How do you stop this? The only way I can see is to allow vendors to build
equiavalents which can produce documents in these formats (e.g. Word format). Sun tried this with StarOffice but there were niggly
differences between the formats and they were not able to completely match the Word formatting, so documents produced in
MS Word did not look or behave the same within StarOffice,and vice-versa. Unless the behaviour is exectly the same it is useless
to migrate away from MS software. Another monopolistic tactic and MS uses it well to fill their coffers with more unearned dollars.

In conclusion I urge you to consider the ramifications of *not* bringing the MS monopoly to an end.The speed of the IT industry
is such that within a few years left unchecked Microsoft will have total control over the industry, and not even Sun Microsystems
will be able to stem the tide. If this happens my career and that of many other IT professionals will no longer be viable.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Adrian Rossi

_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/
Adrian Rossi, Ph.D., MBCS, C.Eng.
Senior Software Designer & Developer